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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT-ELECT CALDERON'S ADVISORS DISCUSS
FOREIGN POLICY, POLITICAL AGENDA

REF: A. MEXICO 4239
[B](#). MEXICO 5991

[1](#)1. (SBU) Begin Summary. During an October 20 seminar on Mexican policy perspectives sponsored by the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM), Transition Team International Affairs Advisor Arturo Sarukhan discussed President-elect Felipe Calderon's foreign policy priorities, placing the U.S. squarely in front while implicitly criticizing the Fox administration for a lack of leadership in Latin America. Following Sarukhan's remarks, Transition Team political advisor Daniel Hernandez discussed Calderon's commitment to legislative progress on security, prosperity, and poverty reduction. A biographic note on Hernandez is included. End summary.

Criticizing Mexico's Foreign Policy, Surukhan Calls for Leadership

[1](#)2. (SBU) Sarukhan (ref A) began his remarks by lamenting the GOM's lack of foreign policy leadership in Latin America compared to countries like Brazil, emphasizing Mexico's need to assume a more active role in post Cold War international relations. He made clear that Calderon would have three foreign policy focuses: the United States, Latin America, and Asia Pacific, reflecting the order of Mexico's interests abroad. He noted that the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs is vastly under-resourced, especially its consulates in the U.S., which he said require increased capacity to lobby more effectively on behalf of national interests. Sarukhan concluded that a more robust foreign policy could help unify Mexico's polarized society and make Mexico a leader in Latin America.

[1](#)3. (SBU) With regard to relations with the United States, Sarukhan stressed that no country is more vital to Mexico's future, while acknowledging this may be an unpopular reality domestically. The GOM, he calculated, will not successfully advance its interests if it fails to understand the changed security environment in the U.S. following September 11, 2001 and learn to negotiate within the context of that new climate. Sarukhan predicted that Calderon's future government would not insist on legislative change involving U.S. immigration policy, but rather would look for ways to jointly share security and prosperity. He surmised that it would be inappropriate to initiate any grand new visions for the bilateral relationship in the next two years, underlining the importance of building on existing cooperation. Sarukhan highlighted violence, corruption, and money laundering

related to narco-trafficking as priority concerns for both countries. The 2008 corn and beans opening under NAFTA would be another challenging bilateral issue, he noted.

Calderon Seeks Inclusive Political Agenda

¶5. (SBU) Substituting for Josefina Vazquez Mota, who was originally scheduled to attend the seminar, transition team political advisor Daniel Hernandez emphasized that Calderon will seek political alliances and public dialogue to achieve his governing priorities: security, prosperity, and poverty reduction. He referred to the President-elect's legislative agenda and the inauguration of the Mexico 2030 project (Ref B) as evidence of Calderon's efforts to reach out to all political parties and citizens. Hernandez added that Calderon recognizes the social changes afoot in Mexico--demographic shifts, economic transitions resulting from globalization, the advancement of women in politics, and increased public insecurity--and would adapt his governing style to incorporate these new realities.

¶6. (SBU) Bio note: Daniel Hernandez Franco joined Calderon's campaign team in January 2006 as an advisor to campaign coordinator Josefina Vazquez Mota, and is now working as a political coordinator. Hernandez is a professor of public policy at ITAM and has published over 50 books related to demographics, public policy, and the evaluation of social programs. He studied at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and holds a Master's in Public Health from Emory University. For 13 years he researched social demographics, reproductive health, and maternal care for the Mexican Social Security Institute. From 1995-1997 Hernandez

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served as coordinating advisor for the Secretary General of the National Population Council. In 1997 he became the General Director of Planning, Evaluation, and Monitoring for "Progresa" and in 2000 became the National Coordinator of this federal anti-poverty program (Note: Progresa evolved into the Opportunities program under President Fox. End note). Hernandez has also worked as a coordinating advisor at the Secretariat of Social Development and a professor in population studies at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO).

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